GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:351
ANSWERED ON:13.12.2000
PM S VISIT TO USA
CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the US Government urged India to cap the size of the material stockpile of nuclear weapons during the visit of our Prime Minister to that country;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Indian Government thereto,

(c) whether the Government of US also urged India to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT); and

(d) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH)

(a) & (b) The issue of `material stockpile of nuclear weapons` did not come up during the discussions. However, as the Joint Statement indicates, the subject of a cut-off of production of fissile material for weapons and CTBT were discussed. The US side spoke of its moratorium on the production of fissile material for weapons purposes and support for a multilateral moratorium on such production pending conclusion of a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT). Indian side stated its position of support for commencement of multilateral negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament for a universal, non- discriminatory and verifiable Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) that would prohibit the future production of fissile material for weapons purposes. India does not support the idea of any unilateral moratorium on production of fissile material.

(c) & (d) The issue of CTBT was discussed as part of the ongoing dialogue on security and non-proliferation issues. Both sides reiterated their respective commitments to forgo nuclear explosive tests. India reaffirmed that, subject to its supreme national interests, it will continue its voluntary moratorium until the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) comes into effect. The United States reaffirmed its intention to work for ratification of the Treaty by the US Senate at the earliest possible date.